Council recommended acceptance of 40 recommendations and the remaining 19 were recommended for rejection. The recommendations of the Inter-State Council have been forwarded to the concerned Ministries and State Governments in January, 2002 for implementation. The major recommendations regarding legislative relations, role of Governors etc. would, if accepted by the Government, require amendments to the Constitution. Many of the aspects covered by the above recommendations of the Sarkaria Commission/Inter-State Council have also been examined by the National Commission set up to Review the Working of Constitution and they have given their recommendations. The Government will need to take a comprehensive view on these issues after examining the recommendations of the Inter-State Council as well as the Constitution Review Commission. Therefore, it is not possible to indicate a definite time-frame by which these recommendations of the Inter-State Council will be implemented.

Unemployed persons in rural areas

†*445. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made any estimate of the unemployed persons in the rural areas of the country;

(b) if so, what was their number at the end of Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(c) the time-frame fixed by Government to provide job to each of them?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) to (c) The estimates of employment and unemployment are worked out by the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) based on their quinquennial surveys. As per the latest 55th (1999-2000) round of survey, the number of unemployed as Usual Principal and Subsidiary Status (UPSS) during 1999-2000 has been measured at 8.97 million. The number of unemployed persons in rural areas has been estimated at 4.43 million in 1999-2000.

The approach to the Tenth Five Year Plan recognizes the importance of providing gainful employment to the additions to the labour force and the same is listed as one of the monitorable objectives for the Tenth Plan and beyond. The growth strategy of the Tenth Plan would lay emphasis on rapid growth of those sectors which are most likely to create high quality employment

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

opportunities and deal with the policy constraints which discourage growth of employment.

Implementation of the recommendations of Expenditure Reforms Commission

†*446. SHRI MUNNAVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has constituted any Expenditure Reforms Commission to give recommendations with regard to reducing extravagance in his Ministry/Departments;

(b) if so, recommendations made by the Commission so far;

(c) the details of the recommendations yet to be implemented by his Ministry/Departments and reasons for not implementing the same till date; and

(d) by when the same are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF COAL AND MINES (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) The Ministry of Finance, Government of India had Constituted an Expenditure Reforms Commission (ERC).

(b) The summary of the recommendations, relating to the Department of Coal and of the Department of Mines are enclosed as Statement-I and Statement-II respectively. (*See* below)

(c) and (d) The response of the Department of Coal and of the Department of Mines to the ERC's recommendations have been sent to the Ministry of Finance. The response from the Ministry of Finance is awaited.

Statement-I

Summary of the ERC's recommendations relating to department of coal

(1) The Ministry needs to reorient its strategy considering the increasing role that coal sector plays in ensuring energy security.

(2) Unrestricted entry of private developers could be allowed in exploration and production of coal, by expediting the amendment to the Coal Mines Nationalisation Act, 1973, a Bill for which is pending in Parliament.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.